Title: Communicating brand personality: are the web sites doing the talking for food SMEs?

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Abstract:

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to analyse web site brand communication by small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the restaurant franchise industry, using Aaker's brand personality dimensions. It shows how an SME can test its intended positioning against competitors.

Design/methodology/approach – A multistage methodology using a combination of content analysis and correspondence analysis was used. The intention was to illustrate a technique that can be used by SMEs at low cost and with ease.

Findings – Food SMEs are able to communicate brand personality by way of their web sites. The brands and the personality types are presented which clearly reveals the positioning of the competitors.

Practical implications – This paper illustrates a powerful, but simple and relatively inexpensive way for SMEs to study communicated brand personality.

Originality/value – The major contribution of this study is to alert SME scholars and retailers to the potential of computerized content analysis as a means of studying web site content, and the subsequent use of correspondence analysis to understand how to position against competitors.

Keywords: *Brand image, Product management, Product positioning, Restaurants, Small to medium-sized enterprises*